

**SUMMARY OF THE
NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AUGUST 10, 2000**

The Board of Directors of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met at 1:30 p.m. on August 10, 2000 in regular session. The meeting was led by Chair Dr. Charles Brokopp of the Utah Department of Health following the agenda distributed previously to Board members (Attachment A). The list of participants is shown in Attachment B, the new list of action items is given in Attachment C, and the cumulative list of action items is given in Attachment D.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Brokopp led review of the draft minutes of the Board's July 13th meeting. Following discussion, they were approved as submitted. Action items from the past meeting were reviewed and the status discussed.

BRIEFING ON NACLA

Dr. Brokopp introduced Mr. Donald Heirman, Mr. Fred Grunder, and Mr. John O'Neil, representing the National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA). Mr. Heirman reviewed the scope and history of NACLA, as well as some of its current activities. He noted that NACLA's mission is to accredit accrediting bodies, not testing organizations. Of interest is the memorandum of understanding between the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and NACLA, dated July 13, 2000. Mr. Heirman noted that NACLA aims to obtain worldwide accrediting body reciprocity to minimize multiple audits addressing the same scope. He also noted that NACLA is working with a flexible accreditation model and using ISO guides to ensure worldwide acceptability for its multiple stakeholders. Much preliminary work has been required to achieve the present status. The offer was made to assist NELAC as needed, the possibility of developing joint workgroups, and expanding the involvement of NELAC the States in NACLA as appropriate.

In the following discussion, it was noted that the present NIST-NACLA relationship closely parallels the EPA-NELAC relationship. To coordinate the specific needs of federal agencies, NACLA operates a federal liaison committee. It was noted that EPA is not currently involved in NACLA activities. The role of States in NACLA was discussed; while there is some current State representation, it appears to be significantly less, and in differing roles, than in NELAC. This difference could be addressed under the NACLA structure.

It was noted that the NACLA Board of Directors is scheduled to meet August 29 - 30, 2000 and that any observers from the NELAC Board of Directors would be welcome to participate. Mr. O'Neil volunteered to send a meeting agenda to Ms. Hankins who will share it with the NELAC Board.

PBMS DISCUSSION AT NELAC 6i

Ms. Hankins reviewed proposed plans for extending NELAC's support to EPA regarding Performance Based Measurement System (PBMS) implementation at the opening of NELAC 6i. This would include a report by ELAB's PBMS subcommittee and Henry Longest's keynote

address, followed by an open forum hosted by the ELAB PBMS subcommittee to exchange ideas of all stakeholders on the issue. It was noted that NELAC previously offered, and EPA is expecting, implementation strategies on PBMS. Following favorable discussion of this idea, Ms. Hankins offered to send the draft charge to the ELAB PBMS subcommittee for Board comments.

NELAC AS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Discussions with OGC

Ms. Hankins reviewed her conversations with the Office of General Council (OGC) regarding issues involved in EPA's relationship to NELAC as a non-profit organization. It appears that the current roles and responsibilities are legally appropriate, and that NELAC's change to a non-profit status would have complicating effects. She noted that some remaining questions are still under review.

Options

It was noted that at NELAC VI, the Environmental Council of States (ECOS) offered its assistance. Ms. Hankins noted that the Global Institute of Environmental Scientists (GIES) is merging with the ACIL Education Institute and the new organization is to be known as the International Laboratory Institute (ILI); ILI has offered to assist NELAC as needed. She will forward additional information to the Board.

Next Steps

It was suggested that the NELAC Board draft a plan, including roles and responsibilities, for EPA review and comment. It was also suggested that a briefing for EPA be scheduled, to discuss this plan. Following discussion, it was agreed that Ms. Allen, Ms. Labie, and Dr. Brokopp would draft a plan, based on the most recent work by the transition committee, for review by Ms. Hankins and Dr. Billets.

ISO COPYRIGHT

Ms. Hankins reported that additional meetings with EPA legal counsel have been held in an effort to at least reduce the royalty fee.

REPLACEMENT BOARD MEMBER

Dr. Brokopp reported that the search continues for a qualified board member; he requested that Board members assist him in identifying suitable candidates. It was suggested that legal qualifications would be a definite asset, considering the anticipated restructuring of NELAC.

BOARD LIAISON ASSIGNMENT

Dr. Brokopp asked each committee liaison to work with their assigned committee (see minutes of July 13) to identify the three most important issues they expect to address at NELAC 6i. This is to assist the Board prepare.

UPDATE LIST OF STATE REPRESENTATIVES

Dr. Brokopp inquired as to the status of NELAC representatives which are kept in the NELAC Mailing Database. This list has been updated and is undergoing a final review. Dr. Tatsch will forward this list, and the revised directory as soon as this work is complete.

FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE

Ms. Hankins called Board members attention to the July 18, 2000 Federal Register notice, in which

“EPA recommends that permitting authorities and laboratories participate in the National Environment Laboratory Accreditation Program and conduct routine performance audit inspections to evaluate laboratory performance.”

EXPLANATORY NOTES WITHIN NELAC STANDARDS

Ms. Hankins reported that she has had a request for clarification regarding explanatory notes from the Field Activities committee. This practice is consistent with ISO guide format and often proves helpful in interpreting the document. However, following discussion, it was agreed that this is not consistent with current format of the NELAC standard, but it should be considered. Ms. Hankins volunteered to obtain an example and distribute it to the Board for their review.

NEW BUSINESS

Recent Comments

Information from the recent Waste Testing and Quality Assurance Symposium was discussed. It was noted that it was stated that EPA is considering the addition of private sector voting in NELAC, and that transition to a non-profit entity is envisioned in the near future. PBMS was also discussed in the context of method equivalency.

Fields of Testing

Dr. Brokopp indicated that the Program Policy and Structure committee would take the lead on resolving the NELAC Fields of Testing issues, with the direct inputs of the Proficiency Testing and Regulatory Coordination committees.

American Water Works Association’s Water Quality Technology Conference (WQTC)

Dr. Brokopp reported that a half day seminar on NELAC/NELAP has been scheduled for the WQTC meeting to be held in Salt Lake City on November 5-8, 2000. Jerry Parr, Chuck Wibby, Dave Mendenhall, Dave Kimbrough and Dr. Brokopp will be the speakers.

Meeting Date Conflicts

It was noted that the rescheduled dates for NELAC VIi now conflict with the ILAC 2000 meeting scheduled for the same week in Arlington, VA. Although it is impossible to arrange another date, Ms. Hankins indicated that efforts at coordinating NELAC schedules with those of related organizations have been intensified.

Teleconference with John Lyon

Dr. Brokopp related his recent teleconference with EPA’s John Lyon at ORD’s Las Vegas site, regarding future plans for NELAC. He noted EPA has expressed its commitment to grow

NELAC in a manner that meets the needs of the States and EPA (at all organizational levels). He noted that Mr. Lyon evidenced a genuine commitment to NELAC's goals.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of this Board is scheduled for September 14, 2000 at 1:30 pm EDT.

**NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DRAFT AGENDA
AUGUST 10, 2000**

1. Approval of Minutes of July 13, 2000, Meetings* - *Chuck Brokopp*
2. Briefing on NACLA* - *Fred Grunder*
3. PBMS discussion at NELAC 6i - *Jeanne Hankins*
4. NELAC as a non-profit organization* - *Jeanne*
 - OGC reading
 - GEIS offerProgress on ISO Copyright - *Jeanne*
5. Replacement Board Member - *Chuck*
6. Board liaison - identify top 3 priorities - *Chuck*
7. Update list of state representatives - *Chuck*
8. Federal Register Notice (7/18/00)* - *Jeanne*
9. Explanatory Notes within NELAC standards- *Jeanne*
10. New Business

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AUGUST 10, 2000**

Name	Affiliation	Address
Brokopp, Charles Chair	UT Department of Health	T: (801) 584 - 8450 F: (801) 584 - 8486 E: cbrokopp@doh.state.ut.us
Allen, Ann Marie	MA Dept. of Env. Prot.	T: (978) 682 - 5237 F: (978) 688 - 0352 E: ann.marie.allen@state.ma.us
Billets, Steve (invited)	USEPA/ORD/NERL/ESD-LV	T: (702) 798 - 2232 F: (702) 798 - 2261 E: :billets.stephen@epa.gov
Grunder, Fred (invited)	NACLA, Past President	
Hankins, Jeanne Director	USEPA/ORD	T: (919) 541 - 1120 F: (919) 541 - 4261 E: hankins.jeanne@epa.gov
Heirman, Donald (invited)	NACLA, President	
Jackson, Kenneth (invited)	NY State Dept. of Health	T: (518) 485 - 5570 F: (518) 485 - 5568 E: jackson@wadsworth.org
Kimsey, Paul	CA State, Department of Health Services	T: (510) 540 - 2411 F: (510) 540 - 3075 E: pkimsey@dhs.ca.gov
Labie, Sylvia	FL Dept. of Environmental Protection	T: (850) 488 - 2796 F: (850) 922 - 4614 E: labie_s@dep.state.fl.us
O'Neil, Joe (invited)	NACLA	
Pearson, James (absent)	VA Div. of Consol. Lab Services	T: (804) 786 - 7905 F: (804) 371 - 7973 E: jpearson@dgs.state.va.us
Rhyne, Anne (absent)	TX Nat. Res. Conserv. Comm.	T: (512) 239 - 1291 F: (512) 239 - 6410 E: arhyne@tnrcc.state.tx.us
Sample, Jackie	US Navy/US Dept of Defense	T: (843) 764 - 7337 F: (843) 764 - 7360 E: SampleJH@navsea.navy.mil
Slayton, Joe	USEPA/Region 3	T: (410) 305-2653 F: (410) 305-3095 E: slayton.joe@epa.gov
Tatsch, Gene (Contractor Support)	Research Triangle Institute	T: (919) 541 - 6930 F: (828) 628 - 0659 E: cet@rti.org

**NEW ACTION ITEMS
NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AUGUST 10, 2000**

Item No.	Action	Status
1	Mr O'Neil will send a meeting agenda to Ms. Hankins who will share it with the NELAC Board.	
2	Ms. Hankins will send the draft charge to the ELAB PBMS subcommittee for Board comments.	Completed 8/11/00
3	Ms. Allen, Ms. Labie, and Dr. Brokopp will draft a plan, based on the most recent work by the transition committee, for submittal to EPA	
4	Ms. Hankins will forward additional information on the GIES-ACIL organization to the Board.	Completed 8/11/00
5	Board members are to identify suitable candidates for the vacant Board position	
6	Each committee liaison is to identify the three most important issues for their committee at NELAC 6i.	
7	Dr. Tatsch will forward the list of NELAC representatives, and the revised directory, as soon as final checking of the database is complete.	
8	Ms. Hankins volunteered to forward a document containing explanatory wording for Board review.	

**ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS
NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AUGUST 10, 2000**

Date of Meeting	Action	Status
04/13/2000	Dr. Jackson, and Dr. Kimsey will provide a short summary of recent Accrediting Authority workgroup teleconferences to Ms. Hankins to be included in the materials for the next board meeting. (Will be an on-going item).	On-going
01/11/1999	Committee Chairs are to prepare "Frequently Asked Questions" for posting on the NELAC Website. They are to submit these to the Membership and Outreach Committee.	On-going
09/23/1999	Dr. Jackson will draft a policy for responding to future offers of NELAC-associated activities at national meetings.	On-going
01/18/2000	Ms. Hankins will seek clarification on USEPA's NELAC staffing plans.	Clarification requested; awaiting response
01/18/2000	Dr. Jackson will update a mailing list and finalize a letter to encourage participation in NELAC committees.	Completed
	Board members will place follow-up calls to recipients as needed.	On-going
01/18/2000	Ms. Finazzo will check on the relevance of a presentation at the 2000 ACS national meeting and report back to the Board	Completed
05/04/2000	The Membership and Outreach committee will draft a policy addressing the logistics of web-submitted issues: routing, response, etc.	On-going
05/04/2000	Barb Burmeister will Email the PT committee's process for responding to nominations to Jeanne Hankins.	On-going
05/08/2000	Dr. Brokopp will explore organizational issues with ECOS.	Ongoing
07/26/2000	Dr. Pearson, for the Board, will remind the Quality Systems committee that only "essential elements" are to appear in the NELAC standard.	Complete
07/26/2000	Dr. Brokopp will continue to lead exploration of viable options, including financial issues.	Ongoing

Date of Meeting	Action	Status
7/13/00	Board members to forward names of persons to fill Board vacancy.	Ongoing
7/13/00	Ken Jackson will inform NELAP accrediting authorities of Board's decision to: 1. announce primary accreditations of NELAP-accredited laboratories the first week of 2001, and 2. Announce secondary accreditations thereafter.	Completed. Followup: AAs to inform their labs
7/13/00	Jeanne Hankins will contact Wilson Hershey to assist with expansion of the ELAB PBMS subcommittee.	Completed
7/13/00	Chuck Brokopp will draft thank you note to Robbie Roberts of ECOS for his assistance.	In progress
7/13/00	Jeanne Hankins will contact EPA's OGC for assistance in defining an organizational structure for NELAC with which EPA can readily interact.	Completed
7/13/00	The Program Policy and Structure Committee is tasked with developing specific draft wording of a reorganized NELAC at NELAC VII.	Ongoing
7/13/00	Ms. Hankins will schedule regular Board meetings for the rest of the year, for 1:30 - 3:00 pm of the second Thursday of each month.	Completed

